

BEFORE THE PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION  
OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON

IN RE COMPLIANCE	)	PDC CASE NO: #00-878
WITH RCW 42.17	)	
	)	REPORT OF INVESTIGATION
VANCOUVER SCHOOL DISTRICT	)	
	)	
Respondent.	)	
_____	)	

I.

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On February 4, 2000, the Public Disclosure Commission received a complaint filed by Mr. Jami Lund of the Evergreen Freedom Foundation. The complaint alleged a violation of RCW 42.17.680 by the Vancouver School District.

II.

SCOPE

- 2.1 Staff reviewed complaint letter received February 4, 2000.
- 2.2 Staff reviewed the response received March 1, 2000 from Kathryn Wells Murdock, General Counsel for Vancouver Public Schools.

III.

LAW

- 3.1 RCW 42.17.680 states in part:

- (3) **No employer or other person or entity responsible for the disbursement of funds in payment of wages or salaries may withhold or divert a portion of an employee's wages or salaries for contributions to political committees or for use as political**

**contributions except upon the written request of the employee. . . .  
The request is valid for no more than twelve months from the date it  
is made by the employee.**

- (4) Each person or entity who withholds contributions under subsection  
(3) of this section shall maintain open for public inspection for a  
period of no less than three years, during normal business hours,  
documents and books of accounts that shall include a copy of each  
employee's request, the amounts and dates funds were actually  
withheld, and the amounts and dates funds were transferred to a  
political committee. Copies of such information shall be delivered to  
the commission upon request.**

#### IV.

#### FINDINGS

- 4.1 On February 4, 2000, the Public Disclosure Commission received a complaint from Mr. Jami Lund of the Evergreen Freedom Foundation alleging violation of RCW 42.17.680(4) by the Vancouver School District. **(Exhibit 1)** Lund's complaint alleges that he visited the Vancouver School District's Payroll Office (District) on February 3, 2000 and requested to see the payroll deduction authorizations for WEA-PAC contributions. Lund was told that the completed authorization forms were not kept by the District, but rather by the Vancouver Education Association.
- 4.2 A response was received on February 25, 2000 from Kathryn Wells Murdock, General Counsel for Vancouver Public Schools. **(Exhibit 2)** Murdock responded that at the time of Lund's visit, the District housed its copies of WEA-PAC membership authorization forms at the Vancouver Education Association office, where they were available to any member of the public upon request. Ms. Murdock said "[t]he District felt that this storage location did not in any way restrict the public's access to information and met the intent of the law."
- 4.3 The District, on February 11, 2000, moved the authorization forms from the VEA office to the District's business office. The District maintains that it now has employee payroll deduction authorizations for WEA-PAC contributions for the current year as well as the previous two years.

Respectfully submitted this 26th day of May, 2000.

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Lori Anderson

EXHIBITS LIST

- Exhibit 1** Complaint letter received February 4, 2000.
- Exhibit 2** Response letter received February 25, 2000, from Kathryn Wells Murdock,  
General Counsel for the Vancouver School District.